1:Gabb N-5 (1873-1874) 1876
SA19 Talamanca SA19

173 came among them, I could get no more satisfactory answer than that they went to Cartago to buy them. I have been told a vague story, however, that long ago there were two bands living in the country now occupied by the Bri-bris. Those living in the valley, around the junction of the branches of the Tiliri were more powerful than the mountaineers, and forced the latter to pay tribute when they descended to hunt, or cut the material for their bark-cloth clothing. But gradually the lowlanders died out; the highlanders, becoming the more powerful, rebelled against these impositions, and eventually emigrated in such numbers to the country of the former, that the distinction became lost by an amalgamation of the two parties. Even now the Bri-bris, who occupy the lowlands
[563] and most of the hill regions of the Sicsola, look down on their neighbors the Cabecars and treat them as inferiors. The Cabecars, on the other hand, tacitly acknowledge even a social supremacy, and in a mixed party submit to assume the more menial occupations, like bringing water and wood; and are always obliged to wait until the last when food or drink is being served. Few of the Bri-bris speak the Cabecar language, but there are few of the Cabecars who do not speak Bri-bri, and they usually
[622] use it in the presence of strangers. The Cabecars have no chief of their own, but are entirely under the rule of the Bri-bri chief, and have been, from time immemorial. Their subjugation is, in short, complete. At
[793] the same time they have the honor of religious supremacy, in so far as that the high priest, the "*Usekara*," whose office will be explained further on, belongs to their tribe. The ordinary priests, the "*Tsugurs*," who, like the "*Usekara*," are hereditary, come from a group of families on the Coen River, but belong to the Bri-bri tribe.

About the beginning of this century there was a bitter war between the
173 Bri-bris and the Tiribis. The youngest members of the war parties are
721 now mostly dead, and the few remaining survivors are very old men. The last of the warriors proper, mature men at that time, died about 1860, at an extremely advanced age. I have heard the traditions from both sides the question, and of course each party throws all the blame on the other. The Bri-bri story is that some people, a whole family, living on the extreme eastern portion of the Uren district, were found murdered, and no clue discovered to the perpetrators of the act. Not very long afterwards other murders occurred in an equally mysterious manner, which threw the whole country into a state of excitement. Afterwards a small party was attacked by some unknown Indians, a portion killed and some left to tell the tale. The tracks of the strangers were followed through the woods, always keeping to the east, until they were lost. Following this clue, the chief of the Bri-bris sent out a party of armed scouts, who climbed to the summit of the dividing ridge, overlooking the Tilorio. From here they discovered for the first time that they had neighbors; seeing their houses and cornfields in the distance. A large war party was fitted out; they passed the mountains, and without warning descended on the unsuspecting

1:Gabb N-5 (1873-1874) 1876
SA19 Talamanca SA19

enemy, killing large numbers. After this a desultory warfare was kept up; each party striving to take the other unawares, and to capture as many heads as possible. This went on until the Tiribi, reduced to a handful, sued for peace and submitted as a conquered people to the Bri-bris. Since then, the chief of the Bri-bris has always retained the right of final choice of chief of the Tiribis, after nomination of the candidate by his own people. Beyond this, no actual control has ever been exercised. The Tiribi story does not differ from the above, except in the origin. It throws the blame of the first aggression on the Bri-bris. In some respects the Tiribis are superior to the Bri-bris. The children are more respectful to their parents; the women are more modest in dress and behavior, and the men are more industrious. This is their boast, and while they look down on the Bri-bris, the latter despise them as a conquered people. Very little communication occurs between the two tribes, and I could learn of but two cases of intermarriage between them.

I have already said the Tiribis and Cabecars are under the political rule of the Bri-bris. The form of government is extremely simple. One family holds the hereditary right of chieftainship, and up to 1873 the reigning chief had theoretically full powers of government. The succession is not in direct line, but on the death of the incumbent, the most eligible member of the royal family is selected to fill the vacancy. Often a son is passed over in favor of a second cousin of the last chief. The present chief is first cousin of his predecessor, who was nephew of his predecessor, who was in turn a cousin to his.

Formerly the chiefs held only a nominal control over their people. The principal advantages derived from the position were rather of a social than a political nature. The chief was conducted to the best hammock for a seat on entering a house. He was treated to their great luxury, chocolate, when persons of less note were fain to be content with chicha. But in case of a quarrel the chief had to defend himself from the blows of the long, heavy fighting-stick like any ordinary mortal. Within the last decade or two, the traders, by throwing their influence on the side of the chief, have caused him to be treated with more respect, and endowed him with the attributes of a judge over his people, in all ordinary disputes. About 1870 or 1871, Santiago, the then chief, paid a visit to Cartago and San José; was well treated, and received an appointment from the Government, for the position which he already held, with the full approval of his tribe. It had been customary for the heir-apparent, the future successor, to hold a position as second, or subordinate chief, with little or no authority. One Lapiz was at that time second chief, and claimed that he was more entitled than the other to the chieftainship. Exaggerated ideas of great mineral wealth in "Talamanca" have been long held in Costa Rica and the Commandant of Moen, a little settlement on the Atlantic coast, used principally as a penal station, conspired with Lapiz against Santiago. This individual, named Marchena, advised Lapiz to assassinate his chief, and thereby place himself at the head of the tribe.

5:Urcullu M-5 (1763) 1913
SA19 Talamanca SA19

101 There are seven tribes of those heathens who are known as
131 *Talamancas;* the first is that of the same name, which embraces two others called *Cabécara* and *Biceyta;* the second is called *Térraba;* the third, *Thórar,* on account of living upon an island of that name on the coast of the North Sea;[11] the fourth is named *Changuen;* the fifth is called *Zeguo;* the sixth, *Thoraxque,* and the seventh, *Guaymi.* Of these the last three are in the districts of the Kingdom of *Tierra Firme,* and the first four in this district of *Guatemala.*[12]

721 The Indians of all these tribes are generally brave and warlike;
[411] for their most common exercise is to go about with bows and spears practicing for their wars, which they are generally engaged in with each other for the purpose of enslaving the men and carrying off the women. The sport and diversion of the boys is
[868] to shoot arrows and throw spears and they thus become very
[859] skilfull in the handling of them.

All the men of these tribes go entirely naked, only the *Tala-*
291 *mancas* covering their private parts with girdles. The women all wear the girdle down to the knee, or use a blanket, which they
[286] weave from cotton or with *mastate* (a bark fibre) which they get by cutting trees.

304 The greatest sport of these barbarians is to paint themselves
[302] black over the whole of their bodies, which they do with the greatest hardiness, allowing themselves to be scarified by the experts whom they have among them, and over the bleeding places they put *copal,*[13] which makes them swell up, and some even die by being cut in delicate parts, such as the face, neck and elsewhere. When they kill an enemy in war, they make a
304 hole with a peg of strong wood and they drill the cartilage of the
554 nose, as well as the lower lip; and when they have opened these two holes they put in each one of them a little bone like a cigar-

[11] The island of *Téjar* or Island of *Colón.*

[12] The enumeration which Padre Urcullu made was not strictly correct,
[114] inasmuch as the *Zeguas, Thoraxques* or *Doraxques* and *Guaymies* lived wholly or in part, like the *Guaymies,* in the territory of *Costa Rica;* but it will be noted that besides, according to his statement, the Island of *Colón,* and consequently the *Bay of Almirante* belonged to *Costa Rica.* M. M. P.

[13] *Protium copal.*

174 [721] continued to be Cabécar. Gabb [37] was the first to mention this as well as to recount the tradition of war between the Bribri and Tiribis which ended in 1827.[38] As a consequence, the winning Bribri became the political rulers of [643] Talamanca. From this phenomenon, a King of Talamanca evolved.

643 [642] At the time of Gabb, one family had the "hereditary right of chieftainship, and up to 1873, the reigning chief had theoretically full powers of government." [39] The chief was followed at his death by the best-suited person in the royal family, not necessarily the son. The situation in Talamanca at this period was so complex that a number of candidates for the position, all blood relatives, appeared. Each "King" was woefully lacking in preparation and was too firm an addict of alcohol. A sailor 643 from Baltimore, Mr. John H. Lyon, who went 648 to Talamanca in 1858 looking for fortune, fell in love with the country and made it his home. He had an Indian family and acquired such a strong position among these people that the Costa Rican government finally asked him to accept the task of governing the Talamancas.[40] For the purposes of the present study, it is worth noting that the memory of the "King" still remains and the clan to which the "King" belonged has continued as a mixture of Bribri and Cabécar (*see* Social Organization).

101 **The Southern Side of the Talamanca Range.** South of the Talamanca Range two names are associated with the region under discussion, the Coto and the Turucaca as we noted before. None of these peoples exist today although their blood remains in that of the composite Boruca of southeastern Costa Rica.[41]

In this area, however, on the very slopes of the range, are two settlements of Bribri and [361] one of Cabécares, while in the General Valley, west of Potrero Grande, a small group of Cabécares are located in China Kichá (Orange Root) [42] at the confluence of the Pejibayal with the General River.

[101] upper Changuinola River in Panama, and who inhabited at one time the Zorquín River.

[37] *See* Fernández Guardia, 1918, p. 127.
[38] Gabb, 1875, p. 489.
[39] Gabb, 1875, pp. 489–91.
[40] Stone, 1949.
[41] *Kichá* also means "string or rope."

SA19 Talamanca SA19

[P. 11(A)] Bribri Cabecar

177 many distinct degrees of acculturation. These will be touched upon in the course of this paper.

621 192 **Villages.** Villages in the European sense of the word are unknown and have always been non-existent as far as these peoples are concerned. Their very language denotes this fact. Neither in Bribrí nor in Cabécar is there a word for town or city. The idea is understood because of contact with the outside. In Bribri, city is expressed by *koṇ* (place or extension) *bLuburu* (much or great). Town is termed *koṇ* or *ké* (*ké* is "place" in the Cabécar tongue and also by adoption, but slightly modified by accent, in Bribri) and *kəbi* which means Cabécar. This significantly brings to mind the conquest of the Cabécares by the less-cultured Bribri. In Cabécar, city is also understood and is expressed by the word *bužiga* or, literally, *bu* (house) *žiga* (many), and town by *kạ* meaning "place" and also signifying Talamanca in the sense of "our home."

[177] [721] 621 861

When discussing this, the statement of Joan

[Text continues top of P. 11(B)--Analyst]

SUBSISTENCE ACTIVITIES

241 **Farming.** Agriculture differs according to the location. The people on the Pacific side have the advantage of both climate and education. Here planting is controlled by a marked wet and dry season, while physically there are wider valleys and gentler slopes. In Talamanca and Chirripó, planting is done at any time of the year although May is the favorite month. Cultivation is usually found on the steepest hillsides not only because flat land is scarce but also because this offers the best protection against the inevitable pigs which are kept by the Indians for economic reasons.

[231]

The method of farming also varies slightly. The slash-burn technique is prevalent on the Pacific side, but on the other slope, excessive rains control the situation. Although occasional burning is carried out, the usual practice is to remove the small bush and to allow the rest of the downed forest to decay, chopping it with a machete to quicken the process. Instead of waiting until the wood has disappeared, planting is done in between the decomposing material.

[Text continues bottom of P. 11(B)--Analyst]

6:Stone E-5 (1956-1959)1962
SA19 Talamanca SA19
[P. 102(A)]

APPENDIX III: ANTONIO SALDAÑA, LAST KING OF TALAMANCA

by Carlos Meléndez Ch.

CONSTITUTIONALLY, Costa Rica rejected the monarchical form of government in the third decade of the 19th century. Nevertheless, at the beginning of the present era, there was still a reigning king in this country. His name was Antonio Saldaña, a picturesque and proud individual who ruled over the Talamancan Indians.

It is most probable that the title of King among the Talamancans was borrowed from the Zambo-Mosquitos who, under English guidance, had established a "monarchy" on the Mosquito shore which was aimed at protecting the British claim within this area.

At the beginning of the 19th century and without any relationship to the political happenings in Costa Rica, the tribes of Talamanca began to war with one another, the Bribri winning.

There were three chieftains or kings of importance in Talamanca in 1862. These were Chirimo, Santiago Mayas, and Lapis. The most powerful one was Chirimo.[1] In July, 1867, the National Congress passed a law signed by the President of the Republic making the Talamancan chiefs "jefe políticos." This was a silent recognition of the position maintained by the kings in the community. The same law gave these individuals the right to govern and administer justice according to their customs, but under a Director of the Settlements. For this purpose, the government appointed Mr. John H. Lyon, a North American native of Baltimore, who had lived for many years in the region and was well known and respected by the Indians.

At the death of Chirimo, Santiago became the principal king. He visited San José, the

[1] Fernández Guardia, 1918, p. 147; Pérez Zeledón, 1913, pp. 148–49.